

RELIGIOUS INFORMER.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY EBENEZER CHASE, P. M. ENFIELD, N. H.

To whom all letters, must be addressed.

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NEW YEAR.

Friends and Brethren,

God, for some wise purpose, has preserved us to see another New Year, while many with whom we were acquainted, were one year ago in health, and now slumber in the grave. O God! why are we spared! Are we more holy than we were one year ago? more devoted to Christ's service? Do we feel a greater concern for the welfare of mankind? or pray more earnestly for their salvation? It is certain we are one year nearer the grave, and as time passes away, each moment ought to be improved to the glory of the Lord. O my soul, what have I done the past year? how has my time been spent? Has my conduct been such, that it will stand the test in the great day? or has my time been too much spent in trifles? "*Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*" Matt. xii. 36. O how should these words rest in our minds. When we are alone, we should watch our thoughts, knowing that the searcher of hearts discovers the inmost recesses of our souls, that nothing can be hid from his view. When in company, we should watch our words and actions, that we speak or do nothing to dishonor that religion, we profess to love; and in order to enable us more effectually to observe this, let us ask the blessing of God on our undertakings, and always be careful to abandon that, which we do not feel an evidence that God approbates; and to assist us further, when we are about to do or say any thing, let us ask ourselves the two following questions: 1st. If Christ were here, would HE do or say it? 2d. If I were on my dying bed, and expected to launch into eternity in a few hours, would I do or say it? By having these questions constantly in mind, it may serve as a check to much trifling employment.

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We should ever keep in view the hour of death as though near at hand, and at the close of the year especially, we should look back upon our lives, and see if there is no place that might be mended. Let us also look forward a little with seriousness and attention, and *learn wisdom by the consideration of our latter end.* Think, O my soul, when death comes, thou art to enter upon the eternal world, and be fixed either in heaven or hell. All the schemes and cares, the hopes and fears, the pleasures and sorrows of life, will come to their period, and the world of spirits will open upon thee. And O, how soon may it open; perhaps before another year shall roll around or even before the returning sun brings the light of another day. To-morrow's sun may not enlighten mine eyes, but only shine around a senseless corpse, which may lie in the place of this animated body.

Now, O my soul, answer as in the sight of God, art thou ready? art thou ready? Is there no sin unforsaken, and so unrepented of, to fill me with anguish in my departing moments, and to make me tremble on the brink of eternity? Dread to remain under the guilt of it, and this moment renew thy most earnest applications to the mercy of God and the blood of the Redeemer, for deliverance from it.

But if the great account be already adjusted, start not at the thoughts of a separation; it is not in the power of death to hurt a soul devoted to God, and united to the great Redeemer. It may take us from our worldly comforts; it may disconcert and break our schemes for service on earth; but diviner entertainments and nobler services await us beyond the grave.

Since heaven is so glorious, and eternal things of so great importance, let us now as individuals dedicate ourselves anew to the service of God, and from our hearts say,—

"Blessed God! it is with the utmost solemnity that I make this surrender of myself unto thee. *Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; I avouch the Lord this day to be my God; and I avouch and declare myself this day to be one of his covenant children and people....* Hear, O thou God of heaven, and record it in the book of thy remembrance, that henceforth I am thine, entirely thine. I would not merely consecrate unto thee some of my powers, or some of my possessions; or give thee a certain proportion of my services, or all I am capable of for a limited time...but I would be

wholly thine, and thine forever. From this day do I solemnly renounce all the *former lords, which have had dominion over me*; every sin and every lust; and bid, in thy name, an eternal defiance to the powers of hell, which have most unjustly usurped the empire over my soul, and to all the corruptions, which their fatal temptations have introduced into it. The whole frame of my nature, all the faculties of my mind, and all the members of my body, would I present before thee this day, *as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which I know to be my most reasonable service*. To thee I consecrate all my worldly possessions; in thy service I desire to spend all the remainder of my time upon earth, and beg thou wouldst instruct and influence me, so that whether my abode here be longer or shorter, every year and every month, every day and hour, may be used in such a manner, as shall most effectually promote thine honor, and subserve the schemes of thy wise and gracious providence. And I earnestly pray, that whatever influence thou givest me over others, in any of the superior relations of life in which I may stand, or in consequence of any peculiar regard which may be paid to me, thou wouldst give me strength and courage to exert myself to the utmost for thy glory; resolving, not only that I will myself do it, but that all others, so far as I can rationally and properly influence them, *shall serve the Lord*. In this course, O blessed God, would I steadily persevere to the very end of my life; earnestly praying, that every future day of it may supply the deficiencies, and correct the irregularities of the former; and that I may, by divine grace, be enabled, not only to hold on in that happy way, but daily to grow more active in it!

"Nor do I only consecrate all that I am and have to thy service, but I also most humbly resign and submit myself to thine holy and sovereign will, myself, and all that I can call mine. I leave, O Lord, to thy management and direction, all I possess, and all I wish; and set every enjoyment, and every interest before thee, to be disposed of as thou pleasest. Continue or remove, what thou hast given me; bestow or refuse, what I imagine I want, as thou, Lord, shalt see good!.... And though I dare not say I will never repine, yet I hope I may venture to say, that I will labor, not only to submit, but to acquiesce; not only to bear what thou shalt

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est in thy most afflictive dispensations, but to consent to it, and to praise thee for it; contentedly resolving, in all that thou appointest for me, my will into thine, and looking on myself as nothing, and on thee, O God, as the great eternal ALL, whose word ought to determine every thing, and whose government ought to be the joy of the whole rational creation.

"Use me, O Lord, I beseech thee, as the instrument of thy glory, and honor me so far as, either by doing or suffering what thou shalt appoint, to bring some revenue of praise to thee, and of benefit to the world in which I dwell. And may it please thee, from this day forward, to number me among *thy peculiar people, that I may be no more a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God.* Receive, O heavenly Father, thy returning prodigal! Wash me in the blood of thy dear Son; clothe me with his perfect righteousness; and sanctify me throughout, by the power of thy Spirit!....Destroy, I beseech thee, more and more the power of sin in my heart; transform me more and more into thine own image, and fashion me to the resemblance of Jesus, whom henceforward I would acknowledge as my teacher and sacrifice; my intercessor and my Lord! Communicate to me, I beseech thee, all needful influences of thy purifying, thy cheering, and thy comforting spirit; and *lift up that light of thy countenance upon me,* which will put the sublimest joy and gladness into my soul!

"Dispose my affairs, O God, in a manner which may be most subservient to thy glory, and my own truest happiness; and when I have done and borne thy will upon earth, call me from hence at what time, and in what manner thou pleasest; only grant that in my dying moments, and in the near prospect of eternity, I may remember these my engagements to thee, and may employ my latest breath in thy service!....And do thou, Lord, when thou seest the agonies of dissolving nature upon me, remember this covenant too, even though I should then be incapable of recollecting it! Look down, O heavenly Father, with a pitying eye upon thy languishing, thy dying child! place thine everlasting arms under me for my support; put strength and confidence in my departing spirit; and receive it to the embraces of thine everlasting love! Welcome it to the abodes of *thine*

that sleep in Jesus, to wait with them that glorious day when the last of thy promises to thy covenant people shall be fulfilled in their triumphant resurrection, and that abundant entrance which shall be administered to them into that everlasting kingdom, of which thou hast assured them by thy covenant, and in the hope of which I now lay hold on it, desiring to live and die as with mine hand on that hope.

"And when I am thus numbered among the dead, and all the interests of mortality are over with me forever, if this solemn memorial should chance to fall into the hands of any surviving friends, may it be the means of making serious impressions on their minds! May they read it, not only as my language, but as their own; and learn to fear the Lord my God, and with me to put their trust under the shadow of his wings for time and for eternity! And may they also learn to adore with me that grace, which inclines our hearts to enter into the covenant, and condescends to admit us into it when so inclined; ascribing with me, and with all the nations of the redeemed, to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that glory, honor, and praise, which is so justly due to each divine person for the part he bears in this illustrious work!".....Amen.

In order that the foregoing dedication of ourselves to the Lord, be constantly impressed on our minds, I would recommend that on one particular day in each month, we read this dedication to ourselves, earnestly praying that God would enable us to perform the vows we have made.

E. CHASE.

Enfield, N. H. Jan. 1st, 1825.

FOR THE INFORMER.

Since the No. for December was printed, the clerk of the New-Durham Quarterly Meeting has forwarded the account of that q. m. which we here insert. The names of the Ordained Preachers were printed in the last No. of course will be omitted in this.

ED.

Strafford, N. H. Nov. 2d, 1824.

BELoved BROTHER,

I think the love of Christ constrains me to speak and write of the glory of his powerful kingdom, and the excellency of his precious name. Within a year past, I have

witnessed much of God's wonderful work in the conversion of sinners and comforting of his saints. I have had twenty-three meetings for baptism, and the precious work of reformation still continues. There has been a great accession to the New-Durham q. m. as will be seen in the sequel. The October term of this q. m. was holden at Gilmanton, N. H. and was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. We were much refreshed by the visit and preaching of Elder Reuben Allen, of Rhode Island. Two professed to find Christ, and I humbly pray that all our free Brethren may possess such a spirit of primitive engagedness, as never to be satisfied with great meetings, without the power of God.

The following is as near as I could ascertain the state of the churches belonging to this Q. M.

CHURCHES AND MEMBERS.

Alton,	78	Loudon,	24
Barnstead, 1st,	70	Meredith, 2d,	62
do, 2d,	45	Middleton,	95
Barrington,	40	New-Durham,	75
Brookfield,	18	Nottingham,	67
Candia,	129	Northfield,	31
Canterbury,	138	Pittsfield,	120
Deerfield,	60	Strafford, 1st,	97
Gilford,		do. 2d,	106
Gilmanton, 1st,	130	do. 3d,	123
do. 2d,	15	do. 4th,	50
do. 8d,	35	Raymond,	82
Hawke,	34		
Lebanon, Me.	160	TOTAL,	1874

UNORDAINED PREACHERS.

Names.	Residence.	Names.	Residence.
Joseph M. Harper,	Canterbury,	John Winkley, jr.	Strafford,
Thomas Flanders,	Alton,	Andrew Toss,	Barnstead,
William Swain,	Pittsfield,	Edward Blaisdell,	Lebanon, Me.
John H. Nutter,	Farmington,	Ebenezer Buzzell,	Northfield,

Our next Quarterly Meeting will be holden at Canterbury, on the third Wednesday in January, 1825.

ENOCH PLACE, Clerk

FOR THE INFORMER.

Copy of a letter from Sister Susan Humes, dated at Verona, N. Y. Oneida Co. Oct. 26, 1824.

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST,

About six years ago, by the influences of the spirit of

God, I believe that I was awakened to view myself as being a poor and undone creature, without God, and without hope in the world. Viewing my sins like mountains, rising around me, and the justice of God crying, "*cut the sinner down,*" I found myself lost and helpless, and entirely dependent on God, and the merits of his Son for salvation; then my enquiry was, "Can God be just and the justifier of such a rebel as I am?" I cried unto the Lord, and waited for his coming, and when I thought that peradventure mercy was not for me, or that my sins had separated me so far from God, that the day of grace was entirely over with me, then I cried, Lord, save, I perish. At that time I believe Jesus reached forth his hand of mercy, and upheld me from sinking beneath the raging waves of distress and guilt, that rolled around me, and I begun to build my hopes of heaven and happiness on Jesus, the sure foundation, that is laid in Zion, and then I received great peace of mind, such as the world never gave me, and, thanks be to God, the world has never taken it from me.

After I had travelled a few weeks on my new journey, as I humbly trust, my mind was led to unite with the people, called Calvinist Baptists, in the town of Thompson, Ct. and in a few months, I began to feel a great concern for the welfare of my fellow mortals, who were far from God, and in the way that leads to death. This concern and anxiety of mind, led me to a frequent and careful perusal of the scriptures of divine truth, and there I found the needy and perishing state of the children of men pointed out, and also the way of life and salvation in and through a Redeemer, by which the perishing sons of men might come unto God, and find grace, mercy and peace, yea, and joy in the Holy Ghost, and the more I perused the word of God, the clearer views I had of the way of life and salvation, which Jesus had opened for mortals to walk in, that would lead them to joys on high, and also the perilous situation of those, who were strangers to this heavenly way, and it appeared to me that I must lift up my voice, and tell the world that their sins had separated them from the favor of their God, and that they must break off their sins by righteousness, and that our Great High Priest was able to save to the uttermost all that would come unto God by him. I viewed myself as being altogether insufficient for so great a work, but

the word was, "*My grace shall be sufficient for thee,*" and after striving about two years and a half against this great impression of mind, I found that it increased rather than decreased, and the more that I prayed God to remove it from my mind, the more it was impressed on my mind, that I must go and leave all behind, and sound salvation to a dying world. I often thought I had rather go into the eternal world and be here no more, if I could but meet God in peace, than to go into the world on so great an errand; but I could see no other way to go in safety, only in the path of duty. Then I thought, come life or death, I would try to do the will of God, that I might enjoy his favorable presence, that is better than life; and for about two years and a half, I have been trying to tell the children of men, that except they repent and become as little children, they can in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven, and I have also been trying to tell them, that if they deny themselves and bear their daily cross, and follow Christ, they shall be his disciples, and shall have treasures in heaven. I have travelled in Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut, and have seen the outpourings of the spirit of God in different places in that part of the vineyard of the Lord, and have enjoyed great peace of mind, while laboring in my native land.

The first of last August, feeling it a duty devolving on me, I united with the people called Freewill Baptists, in the state of Rhode Island. I then journeyed into the state of New-York, and have visited the Holland Purchase Y. M. and the brethren in different parts of the state, and find them in many places well engaged in the good cause of Christ, and in some places the enquiry of some is, "what shall we do to be saved."

Since I have been in this state I have travelled betwixt twelve and fifteen hundred miles, and feel encouraged still to go on, for I have heard the cries of many of the wounded, and the songs of some of the redeemed; and may the trumpet of the gospel be sounded, until all shall hear the joyful sound and know it.

I feel the want of more vital religion, and want to be more humble and more given up to the work of the Lord. I hope that the saints will unite their hearts and voices, and look to the Lord and ask for blessings to descend and rest on themselves, and Zion at large.

Biographical remarks upon the character and labors of

ELDER JOHN COLBY.

"He being dead yet speaketh."—Heb. iii. 4.

ELDER COLBY left the habitation of his father, and the company of his friends in Vermont, like Philip, to go toward the south to preach Christ to the people, and woo a bride for his Master; indulging, at the same time, the fond hope of regaining his health, which for several years had been much impaired, and more especially so for several months. In this, however, he was disappointed; having arrived at the house of Dea. Fauquier, he became sensible that he should die with him.

Notwithstanding his outward man had long been decaying, yet he seemed to die suddenly. It is highly satisfactory that he was enabled to preach several times in the borough of Norfolk after his arrival, and thus to finish in Virginia, as it were, before noon, those gospel labors, which he began in the morning of life, in the state of Vermont.

It produces pleasure to the relations and brethren of Elder Colby to contemplate, that, as it has pleased God to call him home when in a distant land, nearly a thousand miles from his friends in Vermont, he was directed to the house of such a man as Dea. Fauquier appears to have been; that he apparently had every necessary help, and all due attention paid him, till he drew his last breath; and that the mortal remains of our departed brother were interred in a decent and christian like manner. Doubtless our tears would start afresh, could we have the privilege of beholding those white marble stones, which stand erect at the head and foot of his grave, and there read the name of him, whom we highly esteemed for his work's sake.

From a child, John Colby was pleasing and engaging in all his deportment. From the time that he experienced religion, that which was solemn and striking attended all his transactions. Those blossoms, which rendered his *summer* delightful, and which ultimately produced such an abundant *harvest*, budded early in his *spring*. He was converted, and by the grace of God, prepared for the ministry very young. He entered, with great boldness and confidence, the beautiful field of the gospel when but a youth, and left father and mother, and brothers and sisters, houses and lands, for the sake of the gospel; and went forth in the name of the Lord, through various states, preaching as he went, saying the kingdom of Heaven is at hand, repent ye, therefore, and believe the gospel. Being furnished with the whole armour of God, and having weapons not carnal but mighty, he was enabled to pull down many of the strong holds of sin and satan; and by him the arrows were made sharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, and hundreds fell under the word.

As a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Elder Colby was humble, engaged, and persevering. He was instant in season and out of season. He frequently rode many miles, and attended several meetings, the same day. In his preaching he was plain and familiar. He communicated his views with ease to himself, and satisfaction to his hearers. Although he was not in the unpleasant habit of using great swelling words, yet his language was generally correct, and his style usual, bordering on the sublime. Like the ancient holy men of God, he spake, as he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost.

He was admirably calculated to attract the attention, and command the esteem of all classes of people. His *gestures* were becoming and graceful. The *words* were solemn and weighty, well selected and arranged; yea, they were like "apples of gold in pictures of silver."

In his public communications he was not only enlivening but awakening, entering deeply into the spirit of the subject, in which he was engaged. Hard indeed must be the heart of that person, who could have beheld the almost worn out body, and heard the solemn and pathetic addresses of Elder Colby, without melting into tenderness, and giving vent to tears.

Had not this man of God been called into the work of the ministry, he probably might have sojourned in the circle of his acquaintance, prospered in the world, and obtained the comforts of life, and thereby have escaped those severe conflicts and painful privations, to which his calling subjected him. But it was not so with him. He must leave all to follow Christ and become a fisher of men.

This vessel was chosen to bear the Saviour's name among the gentiles. He must forsake that *father*, who, under God, gave him life, that *mother*, who sustained him, those *brothers* and *sisters*, who were near and dear unto him, and all his prospects of earthly *gain*, to go forth weeping, bearing precious seed.

The effect of his preaching was wonderful, and the fruit of his labors abundant. He had the satisfaction of seeing hundreds of his fellow men turn to God. He did not labor long in any place, unless signs of reformation began to appear; but would leave that place and go to another where the Macedonian cry was heard. Hence he was in the work of God, and success attended his labors through the whole course of his ministry.

He travelled and preached in many places where a free gospel had not previously been preached, raised the standard of life, proclaimed liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison to them that were bound. The Lord made him instrumental of turning many from darkness to light, and from the power of satan unto God.

In the short course of his pilgrimage he baptized many hundreds.* He had the success, in many instances, of turning a barren wilderness into a fruitful field; and of planting, and setting in gospel order, several churches, which, while he rests from his labors, are increasing in numbers, and growing in grace.

Those, who are unacquainted with the operation and effect of the gospel, and do not know by happy experience, that it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, will probably discredit some of the statements of Elder Colby, concerning conversions and reformations, or at least may conclude that the accounts are exaggerated; but his readers are assured that it is not so. The writer of these remarks was personally acquainted with Elder Colby; he has also travelled into many of those places in which the revivals of religion were, as spoken of by Elder Colby. There are also hundreds of others, now living in the states of Vermont, New-Hampshire, Maine, Rhode-Island,

*By a manuscript, found among his papers since his disease, it appears that from August 12, 1810, to November 28, 1816, he baptized 640 persons.

Ohio, and other places, who can testify that the accounts, which are written in his journal, are true.

In the principles of religion he was firm. He was not *tossed* with every, nor even with *any* wind of doctrine, contrary to the doctrine of Christ. He continued until death with that people* with whom he was first connected; to whom his language was, during his life, "entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee."

In consequence of the active labors, and indefatigable toils of Elder Colby, he had many *hardships* to suffer, many *trials* to encounter, and many *temptations* to endure. He left an earthly father's house, where there was bread enough and to spare, and went forth as *poor*, yet making many *rich*, as *having nothing*, yet *possessing all things*. He faced the piercing winds of the north by night and by day; and underwent perils by sea and by land, which doubtless hastened his death; but he lived long on the earth, for "that life is long, which answers life's great end."

Although he was accustomed to expose error, to bring to light the hidden things of iniquity, and with gentleness and meekness to reprove the faults of others; yet, he possessed an extensive degree of that charity, which is the bond of perfectness, which hopeth all things, which endureth all things, and worketh no ill to its neighbor. It always appeared to rejoice his heart to see the likeness of Christ in any person. And so sensible was he of his relation to the children of God, that he was frequently heard to say, "I, John, am your brother and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."

In his *private* circle, Elder Colby was also a bright and shining light. He was a preacher of righteousness by the *fireside*. In intervals of public worship, he employed his time in praying, singing, and conversing with the people about the things that belonged to their peace. To bring the *sinner* to a consideration of his ways, to comfort the *mourner*, to instruct the *saint*, and to build him up in the most holy faith, was his endeavor and delight. All his movements seemed to declare that he sought a better, that is, a heavenly country, a city, which hath foundations; and that it was his principal aim to persuade others to enter into that rest which remaineth to the people of God; and no doubt that thousands will have reason to rejoice in eternity that they ever saw and heard him.

The light, which was in this excellent man, was seldom, if ever eclipsed by indulging improper passions, or tempers of mind, or any of those vices, which usually attend them. He appeared to have the command of himself, or rather grace reigned in his heart, whereby he was enabled to bring under his body, and keep it in subjection.

With respect to the *person* of this able minister of the New Testament, a few remarks will be made for the satisfaction of those, who never saw him. His form was elegant, his features handsome, his size rather moderate, his constitution naturally delicate, his eyes pleasant, yet piercing, his ears open and attentive, and his tongue like the pen of a ready writer. His dress was usually plain and decent, suited to his station and condition in life. In his *manners* he was affable and genteel—in society he was pleasant and agreeable.

His mode of travelling from place to place was either on horseback,

*The united churches of Christ, commonly called Freewill Baptist.

in a chaise, in a stage, or by water, as his circumstances or health required.

These observations are offered as a tribute of respect to Elder Colby, who has finished his course on earth, fought the good fight of faith, and gone to receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. In this world he had tribulation, but it continued only a short time. His trials are over, and his troubles have come to an end. That glorious Redeemer, who called him to preach his word, who held him in his right hand, and was with him while here, has now received him to himself, and has wiped away all tears from his eyes. He now plucks ambrosial fruit from life's fair tree, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. He dwells in that house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

And now, O reader! let the godly life and pious examples of this faithful servant of Christ, stimulate you, if you are a professor of religion, like him to deny yourself, take the cross, and follow the Saviour, leaving the enjoyments of earth for the far superior joys, which are found in living a holy life, devoted to the service of God.

But if you have never yet experienced a change of heart, fear to live any longer in sin, lest the day of grace should be over, and the wages of sin, which is death, should suddenly come upon you. Turn to the Lord now, while it is an accepted time, that you may enjoy the comforts of religion here, and be prepared with John Colby and all the redeemed of the Lord, for the kingdom of eternal glory.

From the Rhode-Island Baptist

BEAUTIES OF FREE SALVATION.

The doctrine of *free grace*, which teaches us that Christ "tasted death for every man," that whosoever would, might take of the waters of life freely, is so consonant with common sense, reason, the experience of Christians, and the word of God, that notwithstanding many, in effect, deny it, yet they are constrained to admit its general principles. For instance, those who advocate the doctrine of *invincible grace*, and tell us without this, men are like the dead in their graves, at the same time admit, that God requires nothing of his creatures beyond their ability; and tell us, that a limited and fixed number of individuals are elected to eternal life, and that this is the eternal purpose of God, yet, say, the blessings of the gospel are offered to all. Without more prefatory remarks, as our limits will not allow them, we shall proceed to mention a few of the beauties of free salvation.

I. *The doctrine of this system is founded on the principles of immutable Justice.*

1. The Creator of men requires of his creatures such things as they have power to perform. If he requires of them physical action, he has given them physical ability. Are they required to walk? he has given them feet—to labour? he has given them hands—to see? they have eyes—to hear? they have ears. Does he require of them to exercise affection and benevolence toward each other? he has given them a heart, and "the milk of human kindness." Does he make it their duty to be holy? he furnishes them with the means of grace, not only outward, but inward. His spirit strives with all—*Christ enlightens all—the grace which is capable of producing salvation, appears to all.

* John, xxi, 7—11. † John 1, 9.

Were not this the case, the universally acknowledged principle that God requires of men only according to their ability, would be overthrown. It would appear that he enjoined holiness, without imparting the needful ability. Nor can the force of this be evaded by bringing forward the scholastick and metaphysical distinction between natural and moral ability. Our present purpose will not allow us to expose, at large, the insufficiency of this refuge, for what we suppose, are the errors of the decree system. Two observations may, here, be sufficient. First, We should always allow the free exercise of our common sense. Doing this, we shall readily perceive, without the aid of logick or metaphysicks, that if God require a physical action, he has properly qualified us for the purpose—if a moral one, he has done the same; and that a physical action cannot be performed by moral power, neither a moral action by physical power. Second, we shall also perceive that those who talk so much of physical and moral ability, with a view to propagate Calvinism, are obliged in order to make any thing out of their subject, to suppose that men can perform a *moral* action with *natural* ability. We mean by a *moral* action, a *holy exercise of soul*. When we tell them, that men cannot, without grace, perform a *holy action*, the usual reply is, they have natural or physical ability.

2. As God does not require of his creatures to perform a *moral* action with moral ability, so he does not require of them to perform either, beyond their strength, or means. He does not require of a child, that degree of labour, which he expects from the brawny arm of a man. Neither does he require a growth in grace, only in proportion to spiritual light. Said the Saviour, "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." This is rational, for said He, again, "to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." The parable of the talents may be referred to here with great advantage. The man who had two, was not required to gain as many as he who had five. Accordingly, making a proper improvement of his two, he was approved in the same decided manner, as he who had gained five. It was said to each, "Well done, good and faithful servant, * * * enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." The condemnation of him who had but one, was not because he had not gained as much as either of the others, but because he did not put it "to the exchangers" and in this way improve it. This view, gives an opportunity of salvation, to both Jews and Heathen.

3. The benevolent author of our being does not punish one man for the sins of another. "In those days they shall say no more, the fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge * * * Every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Thus said the prophets. What said the apostles? "Every man shall bear his own burden." "Who will render unto every man according to his deeds; to them who, by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, *eternal life*—but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, *indignation and wrath*." This, therefore, destroys the doctrine of imputed sin, to the condemnation of the soul. "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." That is, though men inherit certain disabilities by the fall of their common

ancestor, their souls are not condemned for his sin; and beside, they have an opportunity of salvation from their own sins. This we conceive to be the true exposition of this text. Did it read thus, "where sin abounded, grace abounded," we should suppose, that what was lost in Adam was restored in Christ, without any provision, enabling men to escape the consequences of their own transgression.

II. *Another beauty of free salvation, is the impartial and equal love of the God of grace.*

1. We could argue this delightful truth from the perfections of Deity, had we ad light on it, from express revelation. These require an impartial being. The supposition of a *partial, perfect* being, is absurd. Our heavenly father therefore, is, impartial. He scatters his blessings all abroad. He confines them not to the Jew, or to the Greek. He acts like the common parent of all. Whatever of inequality there is, in the temporal condition of man, this on the whole, connected with the dispensation under which he lives, must be supposed favourable to his eternal interests. On any other supposition, it would prove that God was partial.

2. Fortunately, we have, on this subject, express revelation. Many are the scriptures to demonstrate it. We can quote but few. The first class are such as call upon men to glorify God. "O, praise the Lord all ye nations! praise him, all ye people:—for his merciful kindness is great towards us." "Oh, that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" The second class consist of such, as declare God's disposition towards them and his manner of dealing with them. "The Lord is good to all; and his tender mercies are over all his works." "He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; and wine that maketh glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengtheneth man's heart." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked." "God so loved the world, [not the elect] that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish but have everlasting life."

3. We may add, to these considerations, the fact, that all men are the recipients of divine favour. First, they receive the same common blessings. "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Second, they all enjoy the means of grace in a greater or less degree. Those, who are indulged with the least, have sufficient, if they quench not the spirit. They who enjoy the written word, of course, are the most abundantly blessed with these means, but as an effect to this, not so much is required of them, who have but the light of nature.

(To be continued.)

From the Rhode-Island Baptist.

CONSCIENCE.

It should be a primary object of the christian, to keep a clear conscience. And in order to do this effectually, the opinion of men must have no influence upon his actions; or, at least, must not be regarded when it would lead him to act in violation of his own internal conviction. No matter how foolish a thing may apparently be; a christian must do it if he feel it his duty, unless he can take a different view

of the subject. Point out the person who, for the sake of shunning the reproach of being called singular, superstitious, whimsical, stiff, foolish and the like, has dispensed with certain things which he felt bound to regard; and we have presented to our view a wretched object—a defiled conscience—a traitor to his God—a violator of his trust—a miserable being. O the sweets of a pure conscience. Let me have this if nothing else. If I have to go through fire and water after it, yet let me have a pure conscience. If I have the sneers of the world, and what is more, the disapprobation of christians, still let me do what will keep my conscience clear. O let me ever, ever adhere to this heavenly monitor; let me ever keep my eye on this polar star in the Christian firmament. And though a thing appear ever so absurd, and, I would go further and say, though a thing be ever so absurd, let me, notwithstanding, do it rather than violate my sacred conscience. No man can repair a breach in this; and though I may afterwards be enabled to take different views of the subject, and therefore conscientiously to act differently, still this will not answer my purpose for the time when I took other views, and it cannot therefore heal the wound in my conscience occasioned by doing thus before I saw my way clear.

I would not advance the idea that conscience is a sufficient or even an infallible guide. It may cause us to err in practice, and surely will unless we have correct views; for it will prompt us to the performance of what we consider right, whether it be so or not. But this one thing I say: we must not at any rate violate our conscience; and before doing otherwise than it may happen to require at one time, we must be enabled to take different views of the subject. Hence it is a wretched method adopted by some, to induce men to leave off what they term oddities &c. to ridicule or censure them; for if any are proselyted in this way, it will of course be through shame or fear, and at the dear sacrifice of their conscience. This is reclaiming the erroneous at too high a price; and what is worthy of serious consideration, he is not so good a Christian after his outward reform, when reformed by these means, as he was before, he having now a violated conscience.

Christians should be very tender towards those who have tender consciences. They should remember that if a man think a thing a sin, to him it is a sin. Would they have their brother sin by doing what he cannot do in faith? Instead of thinking lightly of a brother for deviating from custom to maintain a pure conscience, we ought to admire him. Yes—he deserves the warmest admiration of Christians rather than their unfeeling reprehensions.

Christians, especially babes in Christ, will do well to take heed to themselves. It is not enough that your brethren have an opinion so and so. You must be convinced of the propriety of a thing; you must see and feel your way clear, before you act according to their views. Upon your peril, fall in with nothing, till you feel your way clear; at the same time be ever open to conviction; use all proper means for this end; but be sure and be convinced before falling in with it. This is the way to keep a clear conscience: wo to him who does not keep one.

ORION.

Two things should comfort suffering Christians, viz: all that they suffer is not hell; yet it is all the hell they shall suffer.

THE NEW YEAR.

Behold! another year has fled,
Beyond all hope for ever gone;
Advancing quick, lo! in its stead,
Another has its race began.

Thus time's unceasing wheel rolls
round

Nor will for thoughtless mortals
stay;

Till the last trump, with awe pro-
found,

Proclaims the great, the final day.

And is it so, must time advance,

Till days and years shall cease to
be?

How, O my soul should this en-
hance,

The little space allotted thee.

O hear to-day the heavenly voice;

To-day regard the friendly call!

Investigate your secret choice,

And say, is Christ your all in all.

Nor still aside the question lay

Within your breast forgotten
there;

This work becomes a new year's
day,

A day for thoughtfulness & pray'r.

Though you profess to know his
name,

Vow an attachment to his laws;

Would even suffer loss and shame

To shew you love his sacred
cause:

Yet what avails, if here you cease,

And never feel his blood applied,

Communicating conscious peace

By faith in Jesus crucified?

Have you renounc'd proud self to
him?

What was your gain accounted
loss?

Say, is there ought that you can
teem

Above the merits of his cross?

When prostrate at his feet you
lie,

As in his sight with heart sincere

Can you invoke his piercing eye

To read desires implanted there?

Approve, O Lord, my weak essays

And tell me thou indeed art mine:

'Tis this will chase my fears away,

For what can harm a child of
thine.

Youth's Magazine.

DIED

In this town, Nov. 21, Mr. Jonathan Currier, Jr. aged 33, and on the 11th of Dec. his wife, Mrs. Betsey Currier, aged 30. They both died of consumption, and both, we trust, now rejoice together in heaven.

Also, Dec. 26, Dea. Moses Jones, aged 88. He has for many years been a professor of religion, and lived agreeably to his profession; and we doubt not but he rests from his labors, and his works follow him.

NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS.

The editor expects to journey considerably this winter, and concludes to omit the publication of the next *Informer*, until the last of March, after which the numbers will be printed oftener, until the time is made up, so as to complete Vol. 6th in the year as usual.

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